The Rotary Club of Dundas

Community & Community Service Projects

1948 through 2023

As the Rotary Club of Dundas approaches its 75th anniversary (chartered 1948)
We reflect on its inclination towards the Rotary Motto of Service Above Self.

The Club has tried to honour the Service initiative both locally and beyond. Our projects have involved the Club in raising hundreds of dollars for projects at one end of the scale and at the other hundreds of thousands (one nearing a million) for service work.

In this article we attempt to briefly describe our more significant local Community projects over the past 30 year span, and to simply list those of our earlier years. Our Dundas Community has been generous in its support.

In the following narrative, we reflect on the Community projects of the past 30 years in which the Club has been involved. Following those, we simply list our projects of earlier years.

Additionally, The Club has "Birthed" Four daughter Clubs:

1956 The Waterdown Rotary Club
1978 The Ancaster Club
1989 The Dundas Probus Club
2000 The Dundas Valley Sunrise Rotary Club

The years 1991-2021:

Respite Care at St. Joseph's Villa - $212,000 + SJV Fndn Funding – 1990-91

The objective of this project was twofold. It was intended to provide temporary relief for caregivers with compromised family members cared for at home by funding temporary care in a local health care institute. The second objective was to assess and demonstrate the need and the economics of providing government-funded respite as an alternative to caregivers becoming exhausted and having to move their "patients" to long-term care facilities.

The project was led by two Rotarians who involved the administrators of both Wentworth Lodge and St. Joseph's Villa, Dundas, a senior member of the Hamilton District Ontario Health Care Team, and eventually our Member of Provincial Parliament. St. Joseph's Villa had physical beds available but not funding to support them. The project provided funding care for two of those beds and respite care clients were processed through the normal admission and care process. The funding was to ensure that ability to pay was not a barrier to the service. The feedback from caregivers was phenomenal. The demand was such that we quickly developed a waiting list.

Our Club provided $12,000 for development plus $25,000 each for three years for operational expense. The Provincial government matched our bed funding in the amount of $75,000.

The economics demonstrated hundreds of thousands in savings annually as an alternative to moving those clients into critical care or permanent long-term care facilities. The Provincial NDP government adopted the inclusion of Respite in health care funding, which the succeeding Liberal Government implemented.

As the project wound up, St Joseph's found an opportunity to purchase additional funded beds from a private operator with excess capacity, and devoted two of those for additional respite use. Our club contributed an additional $50,000 towards that purchase as well as successfully soliciting funding from The Waterdown and Mountain Sunrise clubs, and private donors.

Upgrading Main Soccer Field $5,000 - 1991

The Club participated in funding the project.

Ronald McDonald House - 1993

The Ronald Macdonald House is adjacent to McMaster Children's Hospital at King Street West and Cootes Drive, Hamilton. It provides a "home away from home" for families of children from a distance away needing hospital care. Club members were involved in the development and funding of the Centre, with a Capital contribution in 1993. Records indicate an additional capital support contribution of $3,500 in 1999.

Routes Youth Centre – 1995 and ongoing - $$thousands

"Routes" is a drop-in and support service for youth, particularly vulnerable youth, primarily in the high school and middle school age range. That age range has been shifting over the years. It currently operates in the "annex" of the old Armouries at King & Market Streets. The service is available after school Tuesday through Friday with occasional Saturday events and activities. It is staffed with two full-time youth workers with additional part-time support as needed. Youth workers focus on the needs and programming of the kids and operation of the Centre. The Board manages Governance and fundraising responsibilities.

Rotarians were involved since the early 1990s in assessing youth needs in Dundas and in developing what became "Routes Youth Centre." Additional start up equipment funding was from our Club ($5,000 in 1995); The Club has been supportive of operating costs since the first "store-front" center was established in 2003 and Rotarians have played key Board leadership roles for most of the Centre's life.

We have supported a number of specific undertakings, the latest in 2020 was a donation of $5,000 to help in renovations to the Centre, replacing some "make-do" furnishings of 2013.

This project represents a continuance of our Club's long-term support of local youth initiatives including "Teen Town" of former years and various youth sports and educational events.

Kaga Park and Shelter upgrade – 1999

The park recognizes the partnering of Dundas with Kaga, Japan. It is a small area at the corner of King & York Streets featuring plantings, greenery, benches and a cottage-roofed type of shelter.

Webster's Falls Bridge Restoration – support $3,000 – 1999

The Greensville Optimists Club undertook to raise community support to restore the historic and picturesque bridge over Spencer's Creek ahead of Webster's Falls.

Formation of the Dundas Valley Sunrise Rotary Club – 1999

Our fourth daughter Club was initiated in 1999 with its official chart night in 2000. With the changing nature of business, and its pressure against taking a couple of hours for Rotary at noon, the idea of an early morning club was accepted. The launch was successful. Unfortunately, it drew some 25 members from the mother club.

We are able to cooperate in local endeavours and fund-raisers yet each maintain our particular "Culture."

To Retire the mortgage on the Civitan Day/Learning Centre – support $4,000 – 1999

Civitan Learning Centre Upgrade $4,000 – 2002

Centennial Park Historical Signage $2,500 – 2000

The Club provided signage relating to the history of the old Turning Basin area, which the park occupies, which formed the end of the Desjardins Canal. This was in conjunction with manpower contributions to establish the Urquart Butterfly Garden in that Park.

Refurbishing of the Community Centre $6,000 – 2000

Lower Spencer Creek Trail $5,000 or $10,000 – completed 2001

The trail running from the intersection of Cotes Drive and East Street through the McMaster property involved a re-building of the trail along the old rail line, and appropriate signage.

Facility expansion at St. Joseph's Villa, Dundas - $250,000 - 2002.

In a multi-million dollar undertaking, the Villa constructed two new wings and performed major renovations to the areas which were to be retained. The objective was to significantly upgrade facilities to render more privacy and homelike environments in modern living accommodations for residents. Our club contributed $250,000 over three years and solicited similar support from other clubs in the area, whose populations utilize the facility.

St Joseph's Villa is a long term care facility offering nearly 400 beds for residents.

Dundas Historical Museum – Ongoing Support

The Museum has been close to our Rotary heart since its inception with numerous donation in support of capital and operating projects. Our 2005 records show our donation at $4,000.

Rotary Cattel Seniors Centre $872,000 - Grand Opening October 2005

The Rotary Cattel Seniors Centre Project, under development for a few years, was distilled, agreements in principle worked out with the City and the Seniors Club, and announced to the public in June of 2003. The 4,000 square foot Centre was constructed on the north side of, and integrated with, the Lions Memorial Community Centre operated by The City. The major funding was from a legacy left to the Club by founding member Wallace C. Cattel, which was expanded by other fundraising projects. The Centre was officially opened with a number of "Wall's Boys" – Wally's former Ontario Champion Lacrosse team in attendance. Soon after Wally came to town in 1938 he was challenged to help young boys of the town who were getting into trouble ... hence Lacrosse and recreation work. It was anticipated that the new seniors Centre would free up vacated space in the Community Centre for youth centre/drop-in activities.

Skating Pad Dundas Driving Park - $45,000 – 2008

The Rotary Outdoor Skating Pad was a project of our daughter club, Dundas Valley Sunrise, in which they built and turned over to The City, for free public use, the well-used pad in the Driving Park. Our contribution, in addition to labour and fundraising support, was $45,000 cash.

Clock in the Driving Park – $1,500 - 2009

The dream of our President for the year 2008-09 was to place a clock in the Driving Park so kids and others could check the time when enjoying the many attractions of the park. It was purchased and erected with member labour.

Home & Business Fairs – 2011-14

The object of this event, which we featured for three years, was to showcase local businesses and their leadership, and to invite citizens to see what our local business community has to offer. It also publicized Rotary and made a few bucks for support of local needs.

Rotary Creekside Parkette $360,000^{+} - 2013

The park in the middle of the four condominium buildings (Creekside) and senor living complex (Amica), at the corners of Hatt and Ogilvie Streets, was a project to provide parkland in the midst of an area which houses many seniors, and had an initial goal of avoiding the higher density of another huge building on the site. The City purchased the land. The four condo building residents and Amica were to put $60,000 each into the project. Rotary matched with their $60,000, and managed the project in cooperation with the City Councillor for Dundas. The park provides walkways, a gazebo, benches, a children's play structure, plantings, and greenspace in the form of lawn areas.

Eco Park – 2014

Our focus was on a segment of the larger park along the Niagara Escarpment in Dundas. We were one of a number of participants, under the umbrella of the Hamilton Conservation Foundation, who purchased the property along the north side of the Desjardins Canal, formerly the Veldhuis Greenhouses property (which gave Dundas the name of "Cactus Town" in its earlier years). The old greenhouse structures were removed, the chimney of the old heating building retained, walking paths constructed, and the area returned to somewhat of a natural-state park. Contributions were financial and in kind, including a little sweat of the brow. The larger parkland, from the old canal to the escarpment, is intended to preserve one of the most remarkable natural resources in Canada.

Ellen Osler House Window Replacement - 2016

One of Dundas' heritage buildings, the Ellen Osler House is used by The Salvation Army as a home to serve female Department of Corrections detainees for a program to help them to move back into society as productive citizens.

Servery – Dundas Museum and Archives - $20,000 – 2018

This project included the gutting and equipping of a kitchenette in the old cottage of the Museum. The "pantry" had to be brought into line with health and safety regulations, and enhanced to provide an adequate facility for the support of functions which utilize the meeting room/auditorium. Our undertaking was to fund the renovation carried out by The Museum.

Seniors' Day luncheons and Dinners

The club has been a financial sponsor and source of labour for a number of these events over the years ... usually with a financial contribution of around $1,000 each**.** The idea is to collect seniors from the community together for a meal and a program simply to demonstrate that the community is grateful for them.

Hospice – St Joseph's Villa $15,000 – 2019

The project of The Villa was to provide a building to accommodate ten private rooms, and to support its ongoing operation. The program provides accommodation and specialized care for those in their final months, or days, of life. The Club made a corporate donation amounting to $15,000 and we know that individual Rotarians made personal contributions in the $thousands.

Winter Clothing Drives & Secret Santa

Our winter Clothing Drive is one of spending a couple of days in a mall parking lot collecting good used clothing for a street mission in The City's core. Our Secret Santa collects donations to purchase presents for some needy family or small group in the community.

These little projects of providing assistance to the less fortunate are but two of hundreds where a little effort and a few dollars meet specific needs in our community. Many of these are so natural, and of such limited effort, that they do not make the President's Reports or even the Minutes of the Board. But, they are basic to our motto of Service Above Self.

Spring Creek Bridge – Bruce Trail Conservancy $10,000 2023

The Club funded the building of this walking bridge in Dundas on the trail extending from Niagara Falls to Tobermory along the Niagara Escarpment

The years 1948-1990:

1951 Complete Wiring of the original Dundas Arena $2800
1968 Construction of Wading Pool in Dundas Driving Park $12,000
1969-70 Donation to Help in Construct Indoor Swimming Pool $3,500+
1972 Participation in the formation of, and ongoing support for Dundas Community Services
1974-5 Moving the Dr's Office from King St. to Museum Property $20,000
1979 Purchase of a handicap-equipped "bussette" for Dundas' Rygiel home $17,000
1981 "Dunwatan" – Purchase of property and building on Olfield Road, plus renovations, to create a Sheltered Workshop, for younger adults with limitations. The centre and program were named "Westfield Academy." The initial property purchase was an "in trust" by a couple of members while the Club

deliberated. A temporary holding Company, "Dunwatan Project Inc.," was formed to purchase and manage the property, with interim rental income, until the secured and revitalized property was turned over to the North Wentworth Association for the Mentally Handicapped. Ongoing operations were assumed by the Association with costs covered by government grants. The project was undertaken in cooperation with our daughter Clubs Waterdown and Ancaster with a total project outlay of $250,000. The purchase was managed with donations, member loans, and corporate mortgages. Aggressive fundraising projects were undertaken, loans were repaid, and the mortgages burned by summer 1984.

1981 First Annual Canada Day Pancake Breakfast in Dundas Driving Park.

1985 The last purchase & maintenance of vans for transportations of seniors (4 over the years)

1986 Purchase of Lounge Furniture for Sherwood Place Seniors Housing $5,000

1988 Refurbished Park Wading Pool $16,000

1989 Children's Play Center, Dundas Driving Park $10,000

1989 Donation to Dundas Hardball Playing Field $15,000 (lighting)

1991 Contribution towards Upgrading Main Soccer Field $5,000

As well, the Club has supported financially the purchase of various capital equipment at McMaster University Medical Centre, St. Joseph's Hospital, CNIB and others, and has provided operating fund support for sports teams, school projects, social/charitable projects, junior farmers, seniors projects, educational projects, food drives, community events, and needy individuals and families.

For further historical information please see our booklet
Rotary Club of Dundas *50 Years of Service* Club History 1948-1998

File: Rotary/Projects/Community gdc 6 April 2022

Red is to highlight in presentation to Entrepreneurship & Rotary in Dundas April 20.